

WS Directive

2.620 12/04/06

WS AVIATION SAFETY AND OPERATIONS

1. PURPOSE

To provide authority and assign responsibility for adherence to standards for the safe use of aircraft in Wildlife Services (WS) program activities.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This directive revises WS Directive 2.620 dated 12/12/01.

3. BACKGROUND

The WS program uses aviation activities in its efforts to protect agriculture, natural resources, property, and human health and safety against damage caused by injurious animals. The use of aircraft is an efficient and cost effective means for conducting activities related to the protection of livestock, wildlife, human health and safety, and other resources.

All WS aviation operations will be conducted in strict compliance with the WS Aviation Operations Manual, the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR), Federal Airborne Hunting Act, and any applicable State and local laws and regulations.

4. POLICY

WS supervisors and managers are responsible for supervision during all aviation activities which they manage. The National Aviation Coordinator (NAC) and Aviation Training and Operations Center (ATOC) staff are available as a support resource. The authority and responsibility for providing policy and guidance for all aviation operations conducted by the WS program rests with the Deputy Administrator for Wildlife Services. This authority is delegated to the NAC who will coordinate all aspects of the aviation activities with the Directors of the WS Eastern and Western Regions, the National Wildlife Research Center, and National program coordinators. The NAC is responsible for oversight of all aviation matters within WS to include:

- a. Inspection and approval of all aircraft used in the WS program.
- b. Initial certifications, flight checks, and periodic proficiency flight checks for all pilots or pilot applicants used in the WS program.

- c. Approval or disqualification of WS pilots, pilot applicants, contract and rental pilots, or other pilots flying for the WS program, whether or not for hire.
- d. Approval or disqualification of all repair and maintenance facilities that service WS aircraft.
- e. Development and conduct of an aviation airworthiness program for WS aviation activities.
- f. Development of an aviation safety program for WS activities.

The NAC may delegate the above responsibilities to the ATOC staff, but shall retain oversight and accountability.

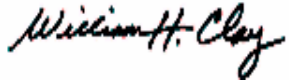
The authority and responsibility for developing a national aviation safety program for WS activities resides with the NAC. The purpose of the WS Aviation Safety Program is to provide safety guidelines for aviation activities that have been identified as the basis for an overall approach to achieving safer flight operations. The well-being of agency and contract personnel, while performing the daily mission of WS, is the primary focus of the Safety Program and the accident prevention efforts set forth by WS.

No aircraft shall be used in WS activities (either through contract, agreement, or volunteer) that have not been approved through the office of the NAC, except for commercial travel purposes. The WS Aviation Operations Manual prescribes minimum standards for primary aircraft uses in WS and establishes the WS airworthiness program. All flight, ground, and maintenance personnel directly associated with WS flight operations will adhere to this manual dated 05/11/04, or its amendments, and Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), the FAR, Part 91, 133, and 137. WS has prepared the Aviation Manual using 14 CFR Part 135 as a guide.

5. REFERENCES

WS Aviation Operations Manual (05/11/04).
APHIS Aircraft Operations Manual (APHIS 5400-4) (08/20/99).
APHIS Safety and Health Manual, Chapter 3 (Manual 203).
14 CFR Part 43 - Maintenance, preventive maintenance, rebuilding, and alteration.
14 CFR Part 61 - Certification: Pilots, flight instructors, and ground instructors.
14 CFR Part 91 - General operating and flight rules.
14 CFR Part 133 - Rotorcraft external-load operations.
14 CFR Part 135 - Operating requirements: Commuter and on demand operations and rules governing persons on board such aircraft.
14 CFR Part 137 - Agricultural aircraft operations.
Federal Property Administrative Services Act of 1949.
OMB Circulars A-76, A-126, and A-11 Exhibit 300.

The Economy Act of 1932 (31 U.S.C. 1535 and 1536).
50 CFR Part 19 - Airborne Hunting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William H. Clay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "C".

Deputy Administrator